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ABSTRACT

Three papers presented at the American Psychological Association's 1973 meetings, together with a brief overview, introduce the concept of experiential education, distinguish three modes of experiential learning, discuss the application of the concept both to general and professional education, and describe a successful 3-year effort at the University of Kentucky to establish a university-wide, centrally coordinated program of experiential education. (Author)

# EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION: A NEW DIRECTION FOR AN OLD CONCEPT

Papers delivered under sponsorship of the Humanistic Psychology Division, at the 81st Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, August 28, 1973

by

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I

# OPENING REMARKS:

# THE CONCEPT OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

By John B. Stephenson, Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Kentucky

The three papers included here are intended to clarify what is meant by experiential education, to argue its applicability to widely different kinds of higher education programs, and to illustrate its viability by describing the development of a centralized experiential education program at the University of Kentucky.

Although later remarks will be devoted to the matter of differentiating concepts of learning applied to non-classroom education, I believe it will serve a useful purpose to suggest at the outset what is intended by the term "experiential learning".

To do this, allow me to paraphrase James Coleman's distinction between traditional schooling and experiential learning. He says, "the student role is not a role of taking action and experiencing consequences." "It is a relatively passive role, always in preparation for action, but never acting." (James S. Coleman, in the Review of Educational Research, forthcoming.) This setting for learning-as-student is the classroom. The method is "learning through being taught as a student," not "learning

through experience as a responsible actor." In traditional schooling, the teacher is the primary medium, replacing the medium of action.

By experiential education, then, we mean simply the reflective involvement of students in non-classroom action as a planned part of an educational program.

What is to be gained through experiential education that is difficult to achieve through traditional schooling? The idea is to join what has been called "the two lives of the student" into coordination, to join thought and action, reflection and performance, theory and results, as it has been put by James A. Perkins of the Institute for Educational Development (quoted in Phillip Ritterbush, ed., Let the Entire Community Become Our University.)

The authors of this set of papers see in this concept--which is duly recognized as ancient in its heritage--a clear focus for university education in the future, and we believe it will come to pass in varying forms and at varying speeds during this decade. We believe that, despite the air of evangelism which characterizes the current movement, experiential education, under whatever name, is no mere educational fad, but holds the potential for an important reform in the university.

The newly-named Executive Director for Experiential Education at the University of Kentucky, Dr. Robert Sexton, recently wrote the following about the value of internship experiences:

"A large number of educators, including myself, know through direct personal experience that students can find fantastically rewarding learning opportunities away from the classroom in internships. We have found that students return from internships with a reawakened sense of their learning powers, with a more sensitive and incisive understanding of political and social undercurrents, with a clearer self awareness and understanding of where they are headed, with a greater understanding of the possibilities and problems of institutional reform, and with an ear for the nuances and interrelatedness of all sorts of administrative, political, social and cultural phenomena. We have found that these results can come from placement of students in real work situations with empathetic and alert supervisors, combined with outside intellectual stimulation designed to help the student pull himself above his specific job and observe himself in the total scheme of things." (in Ritterbush, ep. cit.)

words reflect the spirit in which a number of individuals at the University of Kentucky have experimented with experiential education as an integral part of University programs. We hope you will find our experience valuable, and that you will profit from hearing the outcomes of reflection on our own action.

II

# DIFFERENTIATION OF CONCEPTS OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

By Daniel S. Arnold, Associate Dean for
Teacher Education, College of Education,
University of Kentucky

The school of education on most university campuses is in a somewhat schizophrenic position. It is not entirely compatible with arts and sciences schools because of its professional school orientation. It is not completely at home with most other professional colleges because the larger proportion of education students are undergraduates. It has a great deal more at stake in the adequacy of general education programs than almost any other school because its graduates will become the purveyors of general education to most of the population.

The school of education, then, must try to have it both ways--a strong general education and strong professional preparation in four or five years of instruction. For some time most schools have attempted to meet this double need by incorporating field experiences in the undergraduate program. While field-based instruction and student field experiences are not unique to the field of teacher education, the successful use of this approach in that field encourages me to seek broader use of it in undergraduate programs generally. I believe that broader use of experiential education in both the general education and professional education components of programs may help overcome deficits in the

effect that formal education has upon the personal and professional lives of graduates.

Acknowledging at the onset the oversimplification of doing so, I wish to characterize and discuss three primary forms of educational programs currently found in university preparation which make significant use of student experiences in off-campus settings as an integral part of educational preparation. The oversimplification involved in the process of trying to characterize such programs arises from the fact that many such programs will not fit neatly any of the three forms described. That inconvenience is, of course, true of almost all phenomena and creations which one might try to categorize and does not greatly discourage the present attempt.

I have, for this discussion, labeled the three forms as the apprenticeship, experiential learning, and experiential education.

## I. The Apprenticeship

The Apprenticeship is by far the most common of the three experiential models currently used in higher education. The form that this model takes most often is that the teacher or master communicates either verbally or through demonstration a technique or series of techniques. After instruction in the techniques, the student or apprentice goes forth and applies them under some degree of supervision of the teacher. The student receives a critique from the teacher and, with the teacher's

suggestions in mind, again attempts to apply the techniques. Iterations of the application-critique cycle continue until the student reaches an acceptable performance level.

The process described here is the same one recommended by Quintillian for preparing to enter the oratorical profession in his Institutes of Oratory, and is still the major stock-in-trade for training in most professions. The apprenticeship, or the internship, or the practicum, or student teaching, or whatever it may be called in a given institution or college, has, in the U.S., been at the heart of the training program for the professions since colonial times.

More recently some rather significant changes have been made in the basic process. For example, the trend in many professions, including teacher, seems to be toward dispersing the apprenticeship through the extended training period rather than compressing it into the last weeks or months of formal education. It is my understanding that medical and dental students in some schools begin to see patients during their first semester. In the College of Education at the University of Kentucky, as in many similar institutions, most courses in pedagogy have in recent years added a field experience component. One educational justification for this dispersing of the apprenticeship throughout the training process is that students may more successfully acquire skills in smaller bits than if the practicing of those skills is long-delayed.

A second modification in the basic apprenticeship has been made

possible by developing technology. That modification is the inclusion of various types of simulation experiences before the apprentice applies his skills to live subjects or in real situations. The computerized dummy, the video-recorder, computerized gaming and other devices have made possible both a more adequate critique process and made less probable the likelihood that the trainee will do harm to patients, subjects, or students in his early attempts at application.

Despite improvements that have been made in the experiential training process, however, the essential nature of this type of educational experience remains unchanged. The formal classroom experience is designed to equip the student with a set of knowledges, skills and techniques, and the student practices the use of these techniques in a real situation until he can perform them accurately and well. If one were to classify the students cognitive functioning while in the field setting on the Bloom scale, most of it would be at the application level with a modest amount at the analysis level, and little or none at the synthesis and evaluation level.

Of even greater significance, it seems to me, is the possibility that much of the student's formal theoretical training, separated in time as it is from the apprenticeship, never impacts upon his field experience. As a result, large amounts of his theoretical background may not be brought to bear on the solution of immediate and real problems.

II. Experiential Learning

The apprenticeship is, of course, more characteristic of professional education. A fairly recent movement toward the use of experience-based education in general education as opposed to professional schools has generated a second model which I have called experiential learning.

Student pressures for academic reform during the late 1960's have brought about a large number of experimental programs in colleges and universities which seek to follow the dictum "let the community be our classroom". Among the practices that have arisen out of this movement are two that are of some interest.

One of those is the granting of college credit for previous "life experiences". The mechanisms for the granting of credit varies quite widely. In some programs the student is required to demonstrate that he has indeed acquired knowledge through those life experiences which justifies the granting of college credit. This demonstration frequently takes the form of a written examination, an oral examination by faculty or the production of a work which reflects the student's achievement of knowledge and skill. The principle involved in not requiring a student to take courses for which he can demonstrate competence is, of course, well established. Some of the more innovative programs, however, apparently go far beyond established practice by granting credit to students

not on the basis of what they know, but the basis of the condition and circumstances under which they have lived, worked and experienced with little or no evidence of the educational efficacy of the experience as manifested in the student's competence.

A second of the newer credit-granting arrangements that is being tried is the awarding of credit and even degrees based upon a student's self-constructed work-study program. This is the basic instructional plan of the University Without Walls consortium though the amount of credit granted and the degree of self-constructed program varies widely among institutions in the consortium. In this program the student presumably works under and is supervised by a practitioner in the field in which he is studying. The practitioner may or may not have had formal training in the area of endeavor.

The real world orientation of programs like these is seductive for certainly none can argue with the idea that people do learn a great deal from simply living and experiencing. Similarly in the professions and applied arts the value of experience in the area of study is irrefutable. Problems do arise, however, in the implementation of such programs. London, in particular, reports a number of rather bizzare examples of granting of credit and degrees in unusual areas. More recently we have read correspondence from a professional colleague relative to an experience-based doctoral degree that requires a total residence period of four weeks.

For those of us who received our education in traditional, university and college settings, and who tend to interpret the notion of "discipline" in the phrase "educated in a discipline" perhaps too literally, the granting of credit and degrees for previous or on-going experience over which a faculty has neither direction nor means of evaluating the learning outcomes is a rather upsetting notion. That is not to say that such experiences are without value, but it does raise the question of what such credit means. Further, then, one must raise the question of what a degree based in large measure upon such experience means. How can either the credit or the degree be interpreted? The lack of structure in the instructional program that is implied by crediting large blocks of field experience without at least modest attempts to influence learning experiences suggests that the educational institution can attest to very little that the student knows.

Even should programs which are totally or largely off-campus and community-based include evaluation and review processes that can assure technical and theoretical competence in an area of study, the question of residence in a community of scholars remain. The intellectual exchange among peers, interaction between the student and the established scholar, and the model of scholastic problem-solving in a university setting have in the past been viewed as significant contributors to the education of students. I still believe that they are and that a college program that does not provide for such experiences deprives the student educationally.

III. Experiential Education

The third model making use of field-based experience in an educational program, experiential education, in some ways combines the strengths of the other two models. It is congruent with the educational learning model in that it moves instruction in the theoretic, as well as instruction in the applicative, to the field. It borrows from the experiential training model in that the student works and studies under the supervision of a professor or professors. The essence of this model is that the community of scholars, students, and professors, move into the real world of the larger community.

In an experiential education program the professor is required to involve himself in the field experience of the student and to use those experiences and that involvement as the basis for the design of instruction in the discipline which he professes. The student has considerable effect upon the nature, content, and emphasis of the instruction by becoming the discoverer of real problems which the instruction may provide the basis for interpreting, explaining, understanding, or solving. The field based problems course occasionally offered in some social and natural sciences is an approximation to this model.

The Cooperative Urban Teacher Education Program developed at the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory and more recently installed in a number of locations across the country is another example

of an experiential education model on the modest scale. In this program students are placed in inner-city school and community settings to work both as classroom and community agents. The students are supported on site with a psychologist, a sociologist, as well as an educationist. By providing the student with instruction and guidance in learning the basic principles and theories of the behavorial sciences as they confront problems, the ability of the students to perceive the relation of the theoretical principles to the real world is enhanced. In addition, understanding of the psychological and sociological theories is increased.

The following educational advantages are to be realized in an experiential education model:

1) Concurrency of theory and practice.

2) Graduates who are problem identifiers and with ability to apply educational skills to problem solutions.

3) Positive student input into the design of instructional programs.

4) The addition of the human resources of the community for educational advantage.

Development of this form of experiential education and its extension are obviously limited by several factors:

1) Willingness of faculty to commit the time and effort to a more challenging and complex teaching assignment.

2) Availability of funds to support a more expensive educational program.

3) Some academic areas do not lend themselves to field-based instruction.

4) Ability of students to function in a freer learning environment.

In summary, I suggest that the increasing of the experiential component of general education at the undergraduate level can result in significant improvement in the quality of that education by (1) increasing the relevancy of the content, (2) providing for student input into the design of instruction, and (3) making use of the potential of community personnel and other resources in the educative process. On the other hand, sufficient involvement of faculty to provide structure to the learning experience and evaluation of the learning outcomes is required.

III

# EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION IN THE UNIVERSITY: A COMPONENT AND PROGRAM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

By Donald L. Hochstrasser, Associate Professor
of Community Medicine and Anthropology,
University of Kentucky Medical Center

Over the past several years I have been engaged in a number of somewhat special academic and institutional activities as a faculty member at the University of Kentucky. My primary role has been one of teaching, research, and service as a professional social scientist in the newly established field of community medicine. During the last three years, I have had the additional responsibility of serving as a cultural anthropologist and Associate Director at the University's Center for Developmental Change. The Center's central mission has been defined as that of initiating and supporting various institutional programs relating to the study and practice of guided or directed social change.

This latter association has afforded the opportunity for considerable interdisciplinary and some multiprofessional experience in research, graduate education and the broad field of developmental change, as well as the applied social sciences in general. The nature of this work has been particularly pertinent, therefore, from the standpoint of my own professional training and interest in applied anthropology since it has

involved a basic appointment in the Department of Community Medicine with a joint appointment in the Department of Anthropology. In addition, the Center played a key role in establishment of the University's UYA program, and also served as a main vehicle for further institutional, as well as personal and professional, involvement in this and other undertakings of the University in the field of experiential education (as will be described by Professor Harris.)

I

Overall, then, these various activities have provided a rather significant set of relations and interconnections for me in terms of my own personal and professional inclinations, a large share of which have been concerned in one way or another with various aspects of experiential learning and education as a part of the academic enterprise. Suffice it to say here, that as a total experience--indeed, as a rather sustained encounter in experiential learning, this rather unusual set of academic and professional circumstances has conspired to impress upon me rather forcefully that the field of experiential education may well represent what might be considered a third major stage of development in higher education, at least as we know it now. I believe this is particulary true with respect to higher education as it involves the role of the modern university as a major institution in our contemporary society.

With this general background and basic premise in mind, what I would like to do for the remainder of this brief presentation is simply

touch on and share a few of the main thoughts and observations coming out of my exposure to the field of experiential education at the University of Kentucky--which seems to be pretty much in line with, if not somewhat ahead of, the national situation as a whole. My major concern will be with what appears to me at least to be the primary ingredients necessary for the formulation and development of experiential education as a basic component and program of higher education in the University.

In an attempt to get at this matter on a very preliminary but yet systematic basis, a number of interested faculty and students came together to form a special Committee on Experiential Learning. This group, of which I was a member, functioned under the general auspices of the Center for Developmental Change. Several activities carried out by the committee are of particular interest for our topic here.

II

A major activity of the committee, that I especially want to mention, involved a two-session Seminar on Experiential Learning, which was presented as one of a series of seminars on The Future of the University: Stasis or Change sponsored and conducted by the Center during the past academic year. (H. W. Beers, et al, 1972) Much of the discussion and commentary in this seminar focused on some current trends toward what might be called nontraditional education and aspects of experiential learning in today's university. Considerable emphasis in this regard

was given to the importance of recognizing the many pieces or elements of experiential learning already present in conventional education as a full and completely bonafide option for students pursuing general or special courses of university study. In short, the tendency was to concentrate on the congruence of such an experiential education component with liberal arts and general education goals as well as professional or technical fields and special education goals, and to indicate where it differs in that it necessarily expands these goals in new directions, and in new areas and dimensions.

The general impression or effect of the bulk of the seminar, then, was to point out that both the viability and the workability of experiential education as a university program will probably rest to a great degree on its linkages to more traditional educational norms and purposes, but in a new social sense and community context. If I may offer some further interpretation and elaboration on this central theme, it would be as follows:

1. First and foremost, experiential education as a university endeavor must remain essentially academic in nature but at the same time provide for a new direction and level of function in higher education. The basic difference by comparision to a more traditional and largely intramural approach is that it seeks to appropriately incorporate and take advantage of learning resources beyond the campus in order to pursue a higher purpose--this higher purpose being no less than the

revitalization of a contemporary social system that seems incapable of rising above its human and ecological failings without such a change in education.

As Ritterbush (1972:9) has recently observed:

> To the classical concept of a liberally educated person, which traditional academic institutions developed to serve, recent decades have added an egalitarian impulse to extend opportunity for career certification to as many qualified aspirants as possible, which has been if anything too well served by its characteristic institution, the multiversity.

He goes on to indicate that the challenge inherent in the many complex and critical human problems of our contemporary era is "now giving rise to an educational aspiration of a new kind--one that seems capable of leading to a third generation of institutional arrangements for higher education. The new aspiration is centered upon social experience."

I fully agree with this broad assessment, and would add the further observation that this "new aspiration" includes not only a quest for community, but also an urge to serve humanity in a manner that is socially accountable as well as professionally responsible. Consequently, it seeks out unsolved social problems of both an environmental and organizational nature, aiming for exposures that will promote understanding and induce skills which will allow students to play productive roles in human affairs as individuals and citizens.

2. It is then in this present need to move beyond the purely intellectual and the strictly technical to the intrinsically social in human knowledge and understanding that experiential education will find its primary contribution and greatest potential as a basic component of higher education. By the same token, I believe that it is in this sense that the current movement toward an extramurally based program of experiential learning in university study represents a highly promising response to the many charges that the classical concept of liberal or general education is largely irrelevant today, and that the more recent "career-credentialist" approach in terms of professional or special education leads to social disaster both communally and ecologically speaking. For this response necessarily addresses itself to the fact that the intellectual quest of the liberal arts has been largely personal or private in orientation, while the technical pre-occupation of the professional fields has been primarily institutional or vocational in orientation; especially when they are compared to the social concern of the human sciences or studies which are essentially public or communal in orientation.

What seems most called for, then, is not so much a radical overthrow as a fundamental reconstitution of the modern university as it is now organized. In this basic overhaul at the roots, as it were, the intellectual and technical elements would necessarily have to be accepted and treated as simply equal and complimentary to the social dimension in higher education. Hence, they would be viewed as neither superior and

contrary to nor inferior and unnecessary for such institutional change with respect to the function of the university society.

3. Given this general perspective, the new direction for the university represents one of some fairly extreme reorientation formed around social learning and experience in settings other than the classroom, but the educational motive remains genuine. As an institutional enterprise, the endeavor is primarily one of guided or selective experiential learning for the purpose of such social education; or what perhaps might be more aptly termed experiential education in the sense of field experience in the community which aims at social as well as professional or technical and intellectual goals.

There are, of course, definite constraints in this conception of experiential education as it applies at all levels and in all phases of higher education. These constraints consists of certain conditions and limitations that must be taken into account in order for such a "new" educational approach to gain acceptance and credibility as a viable concept from an academic standpoint, which is necessary before it can become a workable program in terms of the present university setting. Two things come readily to mind in this regard.

To begin with, it must be noted that some have contended, often with rather strong and persuasive arguments, that all kinds of learning experiences are of equal educational value, and that recognition of the value of off-campus learning centered around extramurally based field

experience in the community must necessarily debase the currency of academic study by the award of college credit and degrees for the practice of any calling. This, however, overlooks the fact, as Ritterbush (1972:10) points out, that the essence of education is not experience per se, but rather what he calls the "mastery of experience: concentrating it into understanding, protecting it from memory's wear, and relating it to life's needs." It often fails, therefore, "to acknowledge that the experiences that education validates must be those that in the long run prove most worthwhile to society as a whole, and that society retains the capacity to reshape the entire enterprise of education toward its central needs."

In conjunction with this, it also should be emphasized that in reply to the conventional doubts of the academic establishment, one might better indicate that science education only became effective with the institution of laboratory and field work as necessary for experiential learning, and professional education came to depend to an equal degree on clinical and other similar practical experience in the work setting. So it now appears that the contemporary concerns and interests of society will force an end to the classroom's virtual monopoly on general and special education at both the secondary and undergraduate level.

4. The philosophical basis for this position can be found in the work of such modern scholars as Whitehead (1929:16-17), who defines the primary aim of education as "the acquisition of the art of the utilization of knowledge." He makes the further observation pursuant to this goal

that: "This is not an easy doctrine to apply, but a hard one. It contains within itself the problem of keeping knowledge alive, of preventing it from becoming inert, which is the central problem of education."

In this formulation, education is defined more narrowly than learning in general, since it is involved primarily with a deliberate and guided process of learning in the acquisition and application of knowledge. And equally important, it also does away with the now standard pedagogic division of the intellect and thought from the power to feel and to will or do. There is, in fact, a growing awareness of the need at all levels of education to overcome the essentially artificial separation of these modes of knowing--the false dichotomy between the cognitive and affective domains and between thought and action, learning and doing. Further elaboration and refinement of this basic thesis is provided by such commentators on the contemporary scene as Silberman (1970). The recent work of such educationalists as Chamberlin (1969) offers some of the more precise operational guidelines which are clearly in line with an educational approach of this kind.

An especially important point, which should be stressed in this context, is that the relevance and significance of human thought and understanding as conveyed and acquired via the educational process lies in the effective integration of these two fundamental and interrelated themes--the "usefulness" of knowledge and the "wholeness" of knowledge.

This would appear to hold for the broad field of education, regardless of whether the particular programs involved be of a general or special purpose and nature. One of the most crucial considerations here, then, is the fact that experiential learning seems to be a key ingredient, and perhaps even mandatory aspect, of any successful and meaningful education endeavor, whether it occurs in the classroom, the workplace, or the community. It is the social dimension of such learning, however, that is now most needed and most demands the added or extra element of field experience in an off-campus setting.

Granted the philosophical and theoretical soundness of experiential education as a viable academic concept, there remains the equally difficult institutional and primarily organizational or logistical problem of its translation into a workable program from the standpoint of the curriculum in the University. This undertaking will be framed by the particular academic setting and institutional environment, plus the actual attitudes and views which both faculty and students hold toward it. Consequently, in order for field experience education to find its appropriate place as a bonafide and successful endeavor within the context of higher education today, these key factors of human behavior must be taken into careful consideration in terms of the institution and individuals as well as the community and groups included in any given situation.

The focus shifts here, then, to the need for development of a general institutional and organizational framework for experiential education

which concentrates on the structure and means necessary for the translation of experiential learning into experiential education. This is especially pertinent if valid and worthwhile programs of field experience education are to be effectively designed, implemented, and carried through. It is also important for the overall assessment and evaluation of such programs. Another major activity of our special Committee on Experiential Learning dealt largely with this area.

It is noteworthy that in trying to come to grips with this matter in some manageable fashion, it was decided that a much needed step in this direction was some sort of initial delineation of the general goals and specific objectives of experiential education in the case of our own institution, and that perhaps the best approach to this was one of "rank empiricism"--namely, that we try to discover what had been said and done by others and what our own faculty and students thought without trying to unduely structure the information coming in beforehand.

Hence, a large part of our effort in this area consisted of an exploratory study to gain some preliminary notion of what kinds of expectations and priorities faculty and administrators associated with experiential education, particularly for the student, and to see how students would generally react to these "faculty views" in terms of their own perceptions of the goals and values regarding this type of educational program. (T. Maher, et al, 1972:11-25) While it is, of course, impossible to give a full and detailed account of the methods and findings of this inquiry,

several broad aspects of the results might be mentioned.

1. A significant overall congruence was found between the views of faculty and students concerning the general goals of experiential education from the standpoint of the student as regards what might be termed academic or university study per se. This, of course, is rather encouraging in that it may offer a basis for insight into possible programs where the students and faculty could agree on a certain set of objectives, leaving the rest subject to negotiation among faculty and students as occasion warranted.

2. At the same time, however, the differences encountered between faculty and students in their general orientations, while not overly great, still need to be recognized and dealt with, since they indicate that faculty are prone to stress more traditional academic goals whereas students by comparison tend to emphasize more humanistic and contemporary social goals. It would appear, then, that both kinds of goals should be incorporated and given due importance in experiential education. This is especially true insofar as the aspirations and concerns of the students are concerned, and as these reflect the needs and interests of the larger society from which they come--and of which both they and the university are a part.

3. In short, the outcome of this empirical research and initial phase of study would seem to suggest that the current situation at the University of Kentucky does tend, at least in some respects, to be fairly well in line with what might be called the more strictly educational or

student goals of experiential education as we attempted to define and outline it in the previous section. At the same time, however, this highlights another important consideration which our exploratory study was not able to handle in any appreciable degree. Namely, the value and general goals of experiential education for the faculty, the University, and the community, as well as the student, must be included and dealt with as part of the total process and enterprise.

A very basic point coming out of this is that more definite substantive or goal-oriented rather than operational or program-specific objectives must be identified, elaborated, and agreed upon early in the development of an experiential education program. (T. Maher et al, 1972:11-20) The extent to which this can be accomplished will more than likely determine the degree to which it can be expected to take on the shape and form of a fully organized and effective endeavor in field experience education. Additional examination of these general results from our exploratory study, by means of a systems analysis approach, lends the further interpretation and suggestion that such a careful sorting out of multiple goals of experiential education may well be one of the prime factors influencing the scope and the depth of its success as a University program.

Generally speaking, then, if it is to become an effective institutional operation and/or unit of higher education, the overall strategy for experiential education must be one whereby its various aims are translated

into a philosophically integrated and functionally workable system of pedagogic objectives. These objectives will have to be designed and carried out, therefore, in relation to both the process, or activities and procedures, and the input, or commitment in resources and efforts, needed to obtain the desired outcomes; or, that is, the intended effects for all involved--students, faculty, community and institution alike. Dewey (1971), for example, offers perhaps one of the best summary statements of this kind, which deals primarily with the essential academic criteria and types of off-campus study necessary for the introduction of "accredited experiential education" into the university curriculum as a basic unit or system of higher education. (Professor Arnold provides a conceptual framework for establishing the educational credibility of such a typology of off-campus or extramurally based study.)

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In closing, just let me say that there is obviously much more from the work of others, as well as our own efforts at the University of Kentucky, that could and should be included in defining the "arena" and the "mode" of experiential education as a basic component and program of higher education in the University. Consequently, this presentation has been able to provide nothing in the way of any highly sophisticated commentary or study. However, we do hope it may have made some contribution to this symposium.

and given at least some stimulation for further consideration of what we believe to be a most important and altogether challenging field of educational and academic endeavor, and one that holds great promise in helping tc shape the future value and task of the University in contemporary society.

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IV

# THE UNIVERSITY YEAR FOR ACTION PROGRAM AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN THE UNIVERSITY

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For a number of years I have been involved in the development and maintenance of a doctoral program in clinical psychology. Throughout my career as a faculty member with primary responsibilities to graduate students, I have been concerned with not only the limited interaction of graduate students in psychology with persons outside the mental health specialties, but even more with the virtual absence of field experience for undergraduates in psychology.

When I was asked to serve as the chairman of a committee to evaluate the University Year for Action Program during its first year at the University of Kentucky in 1972, I welcomed the opportunity to investigate the possibilities and limitations of field experiences designed to provide services to economically deprived segments of society. My several years of consulting work as a field selection officer for Peace Corps had convinced me that an enormous potential in idealism and commitment to humanitarian service was to be found among young persons of college age, but with too few acceptable and rewarding outlets for their

energies. In addition, my participation in conferences on experiential education sponsored by the Center for Developmental Change at the University of Kentucky had made me aware of the breadth and significance of the concepts.

The University of Kentucky was one of a small number of universities and colleges to obtain grants from Action in Washington, D. C., (which also administers Peace Corps, Vista, and several smaller volunteer programs) to experiment for one year with a program designated the University Year for Action.

Focusing primarily on the alleviation of conditions of poverty, the sponsors of the program in Washington planned to initiate a new phase in the tradition of federal volunteer programs (notably Peace Corps and Vista) by integrating in academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels a valuable field experience for students in the emerging realm of experiential learning. The implementation of such a program required an allotment of stipends as a partial inducement for potential volunteers to render such services, and the development of appropriate systems of awarding academic credits and course grades.

Although it was clear to the representatives of the universities, as well as to the spokesmen for Action, that the development of suitable field facilities and the dispensing of academic credits in academic institutions, which valued their traditions of scholarship, would constitute problems for the initiation and future development of such a program, the desire of the federal

government to seek solutions to a major social problem and the desire of staff members of the University of Kentucky to gain new perspectives on experiential learning rendered the proposal worthy of experimentation. My presentation today deals more with the practical operational aspects of experiential education than with the concepts which have been discussed in detail by the two previous speakers.

The first year of the UYA program at the University of Kentucky focused on short term projects which might provide tangible results needed in low income communities. The stated intents of such an approach were to "counter-act the assumption that this was merely a way for the University to use communities as learning labs," and to increase awareness of the means by which university resources might be used in the process of solving community problems.

Six areas for programming were chosen: (1) Underemployment and Unemployment, (2) Inadequate Daycare for Children, (3) Insufficient Knowledge of, and Access to, Legal Representative, (4) Underutilization of Local Schools as Community Resources, (5) Unavailability of Acceptible Housing to By or Rent at Low Cost, and (6) Special Placements, reserved for the mature, capable, independent students who had already developed working relationships with a specific problem and a specific sponsor.

A total of 60 volunteers received stipends of $2700* for a 12 month

*$50/month stipend; $175/month living allowance

period (or shorter for students in law), and were distributed in the several programming areas over six colleges: Agriculture, Architecture, Arts and Sciences, Business and Economics, Education, Law and Social Professions.

As chairman of the Evaluation Committee, I had the special task of visiting all field agencies throughout central and eastern Kentucky, and of developing the final report of the Committee.

In the context of this presentation, I wish to outline only a few major features of the report.

1. I found virtual unanimity of support for continuation of the program for a second year among students, field supervisors, and faculty advisors, despite the problems which I shall subsequently enumerate.

2. A serious problem was encountered in the requirement of 30 credit hours on a 12 month basis stipulated in the grant for undergraduate UYA Volunteers. Since this block of time constituted approximately one-fourth the entire undergraduate curriculum in field experience outside the classroom, it should come as no surprise that many members of the faculty had reservations about a possible compromise of academic values. Shorter options were strongly recommended.

3. A related problem pertained to the moderate inflation of grades and the need for utilization of a Pass-Fail criterion for course credits earned under the UYA Program.

4. The issue of grading was, in turn, related to the problem of limited communication between faculty advisors, on the one hand, and both students and supervisors of agencies in the field, on the other.

5. The need for a more effective system of selection and arrangement of three-way contracts among students, faculty advisors, and field supervisors in the poverty settings was apparent.

6. The need for a well structured orientation period, perhaps somewhat like the pre-invitational staging developed in recent years by Peace Corps constituted the final major problem.

7. A broader question arose in the context of the evaluation. How does a program focus on a social problem without being tied to the specific needs and operations of a public agency?

In contrast to these critical points, I might summarize the most positive features of the program as it unfolded at the University of Kentucky.

Consensus was found among participants in all categories that the broad, rich field experience, even with limited professional supervision by an expert in one's area, constituted the primary gain for the student. This experience was described as one of longer duration and of much greater variety than the field experience found in the curriculum of even those professional colleges which typically offer clinical or field work at either the undergraduate or graduate level. Such opportunities for experiential learning have been extremely limited in the College of Arts and Sciences. In addition, the contribution of services which might not other-

wise be made available to persons of low income was emphasized. A number of faculty advisors also welcomed the opportunity to further their own education through meaningful professional contact with the community or the state, outside the University. Aside from the more tangible benefits, many students described the experiences as one that could not be obtained by any channel in the regular curriculum. For example, students of law working in a tenant service agency found that they were rendering services to persons whom a typical attorney would never encounter in an entire career, and another contributed significantly to the defense of coal miners in a "black lung" case, while most young graduates of law school who return to their home areas are soon employed to defend the interests of the coal companies.

Several students of Architecture planned and implemented projects (e.g. construction of a playground), while the more traditional experience would have involved strictly the work of a draftsman in an office.

Having moved through Phase I of Experiential Education in the moderately conservative academic environment of the University of Kentucky, the question arose as to whether the University should place a ceiling on this type of activity, or let it expand spontaneously. A number of faculty members complained about 30 credit hours in the field or inflated grades, but somehow the faculty, in general, as well as the administrators, felt that we should move forward.

At the request of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, I then accepted an assignment to explore for the University the feasibility of developing a university-wide plan for experiential education. After interviewing the Deans of all fifteen Colleges, and of the Graduate School, and the chairman of eight major departments in Arts and Sciences, and the Vice-President of the Medical Center, I developed a plan for an Office of Experiential Education, which has recently been funded by the President, and headed by a full-time Executive Director, and an interdependent University Council for Experiential Education with proposed representation from all interested academic units of the University.

The focus of this new adventure for the University will be on the initial and further development of field experiences which go beyond the traditional laboratories of the sciences and arts. These experiences will include not only the vocationally oriented practicum type experiences (e.g. studio credits in the College of Architecture or the practicum in the College of Social Professions) but also non-recurring, even unique field experiences, such as the UYA assignments or the irregular summer assignments of dental students to an Indian reservation.

The emphasis will be not only on the development of experiential learning outside the walls of the University, but also on the arrangement of team placements and interdisciplinary contact in the field where the action is taking place.

I might outline some of the primary functions of the new University Council and office of Experiential Education at the University of Kentucky.

(1) To provide a university-wide system of communication and a central office of information concerning available field assignments to students, faculty, department chairman, deans and administrators on campus, as well as to agencies, students, or university officials from other universities.

(2) To facilitate the arrangement of interdisciplinary team placements in field agencies for students on this campus.

(3) To provide appropriate advice and assistance in new teaching methods to faculty members supervising students in field placements.

(4) To resolve conflicts among academic components on campus which might otherwise tend to monopolize, on the basis of priority of arrival, the financial resources or the supervisory time of the staff in a particular agency, clinic, or institution.

(5) To resolve emerging conflicts among universities or colleges in the use of such facilities.

(6) To develop inter-university programs involving experiential education components among universities in this region of the nation.

(7) To develop proposals for grants or contracts for stipends for students and for administrative support of field programs both within the agencies and within the university.

(8) To locate suitable placements for students of the University of Kentucky in other states or in other regions of the nation, or possibly in foreign countries.

(9) To provide an impetus to departments and colleges within the university to explore fully the potential gains from field work without sacrifices or more general standards of academic excellence.

The major anticipated problems for which uniform principles of administration applicable to all participating colleges or departments might not be found, and which might require specification of a departmental, or college rule, are as follows:

(a) The optimal, maximal, and minimal periods of time for a field assignment.

(b) The optimal, maximal, and minimal number of academic credits to be awarded for a particular field assignment.

(c) The methods of grading.

(d) The mode of earning credits (e.g. requirement of term papers, logs, or research projects).

(e) The necessity of supervision by a professional expert in the discipline, as distinct from competent administrative or more general professional supervision in the field setting.

(f) The desirability (or lack of desirability) of a stipend, and if so, the appropriate amount and type of remuneration.

(g) The necessity of certification or licensure by a state board as a prerequisite to rendering services for pay in some disciplines.

(h) The acceptability of partial supervision of students or para-professionals by more advanced graduate students.

(i) The hierarchy of structure and authority among academic disciplines when functioning in field settings, particularly with regard to the several professional disciplines associated in the Medical Center.

(j) Methods of evaluation of benefits or losses derived from participation in a university plan.

Perhaps we should turn to the students themselves who have had assignments in experiential education through the university year for Action program to find out what improvements are most needed for the launching of a university wide plan. A thoughtful group of volunteers who were interviewed at a conference in 1973, made the following recommendations:

(1) Provision must be made by deans and department chairmen for adequate compensation for teaching time during the academic year or for financial remuneration during the summer months for those faculty members who are directly engaged in supervision of students in any future university wide program in experiential education.

(2) A highly structured program should be developed for those nteers who need structure but structure should not be forced on those students who do not need it. For example, excellent opportunities exist

for research of an outcome or evaluative nature for students in the behavioral sciences, within the context of rendering valuable services to the field agencies.

(3) Shorter options (less than 12 months) with limited numbers of academic credits should be made available.

(4) An orientation period, perhaps somewhat like the five or six day preinvitational staging period developed in Peace Corps, would give the student an opportunity to explore in depth the advantages and disadvantages of a program in experiential education and to assess the suitability for his own needs of particular field placements, as described by agency supervisors, and would provide an opportunity to interact with potential faculty advisors who, in turn, would be evaluating the student's potential. This should be followed by a three or four week orientation period during initial training.

(5) Finally a course booklet listing all courses in the university available for credit in experiential education should be developed and reprinted each year. This should include stipulations for field work which might earn credit under a given course number.

From the faculty's point of view, every effort should be made to select students who have sufficient personal strengths, as well as intellectual assets, to profit maximally from field experience, rather than to provide an easy exit for those who are seeking primarily an escape from whatever happens to be the present situation.

A realistic acknowledgment must be made of the fact that a limited number of students can be processed for optimal field placements within available administrative structure, without overextending existing faculty or saturating the field agencies.

As you may well be aware, a number of small colleges, as well as a few components of several universities have experimented with education outside the walls of the university in some form or another. We believe, however, that the University of Kentucky is one of the first universities in the nation to develop a university wide plan involving even components of a medical center and professional schools, as well as undergraduate and graduate programs.

I am inclined to believe that at least 50 percent of the noise that students have been making for the past five years on campuses throughout the nation has involved a message worth hearing and implementing. When even the graduate dean and vice-president of a medical center concede that something worthwhile can be learned for academic credit outside the traditional framework of the curriculum, I would say that the University is well on its way to expanding the scope and style of its educational offerings during the decade of the 1970's.

It is our hope that this new development will not only minimize the town-gown differences found in many university towns and cities, but will also provide new opportunities for broadening the range of knowledge and activities of faculty members, as well as students. Perhaps an increased

emphasis on inter-disciplinary field experience will not only help a large number of young persons at the threshhold of their careers to explore more realistically the options available to them before making seemingly irreversible vocational choices (a rather practical objective) but will also help to create a place for our undergraduates in psychology, who have been diverted from all pre-professional activities involving service to other persons by the professionalization of psychology at the doctoral level.

Whatever the outcome, we believe that we are moving forward in solid ground, and in the mainstream of the future. Certain types of intellectual activity will always require the closed structure of the classroom, library, and laboratory, but this need not preclude the expansion and refinement of those forms of intellectual endeavor which are and ought to be inter-disciplinary in nature and action-oriented toward effective solution of major problems of the society. If intelligence quotient alone is known to have limited predictive validity for future success in one's private life or vocation, and if classroom performance also has limited predictive power, as has been pointed out recently by McClelland in the American Psychologist (1973), then perhaps we should apply what we already know as psychologists about the analysis of field criteria, and provide for our students those settings which test the adequacy of the full range of motivations, interpersonal, cultural, and characterological assets

available in the individual student for productive intellectual activity and social involvement in future years.